



## **Arlington Open Space Committee**

Date: September 28, 2023.

Time: 7:30 PM.

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation.

Present: Wendy Richter, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, David Morgan, Eliza Hatch, Ann LeRoyer, Brian McBride, David White.

Absent: Shirley Canniff, Brian Kelder, Nelson Mui.

### **Minutes.**

1. Administrative.
  - a. Approval of June 22, 2023 meeting minutes.

The draft minutes of June 22 were approved by a unanimous vote.
  - b. Summer updates.

W. Richter acknowledged the committee's summer party on July 28 at the Arlington Reservoir's Beer Garden in recognition of Emily Nink.
  - c. Website updates.

W. Richter and A. LeRoyer noted that membership and programs on the committee's webpage were out of date. D. Morgan will update the page.
  - d. Other items.

B. McBride noted that he will pick up seasonal updates to the committee's Facebook page after a July and August respite.
2. Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) & CPA Implementation (Action Items).
  - a. OSRP Implementation process.

W. Richter referenced the survey analysis of OSRP implementation goals from the June meeting, and suggested the material be regularly reviewed to assure the committee's work corresponds to these priorities. She noted the importance of coordination with other Town entities to achieve goals, as evidenced in the committee's collaboration with the ARB and MBTA Communities Working Group. Following the committee's letter, committee members met with the Working Group Chairman to discuss options to protect and enhance open space as part of the project planning.
  - b. CPA Projects (No Name Brook, Orchard Signage).

D. Morgan reported that there was one submission, from Hatch, to the RFP for the No Name Brook project. (The Mill Brook and No Name Brook CPA projects were combined into one RFP to provide a more integrated



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and efficient analysis of the greater watershed.) Weston & Sampson is expected to complete the engineering modeling work for both projects this year, which will be used by Hatch for the alternatives analysis beginning early next year. Eventually, ecological restoration and stormwater mitigation design plans for Cooke's Hollow and Meadowbrook Park will be part of the same engineering model, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the entire Mill Brook Corridor. A. LeRoyer asked about the status of the Town's stormwater Management Plan. D. Morgan reported that the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) reports were submitted that day.

D. Morgan reported that the Orchard Signage CPA project outreach is scheduled to start in January. The project involves so little funding that it shouldn't require a formal bidding process.

c. Urban Ecology Framework implementation & outreach.

D. Morgan reported that the map and plant lists he developed in concert with the Urban Ecology Framework were debuted at the Arlington, MA Invasives (ArMI) Town Day booth. He will follow up with collecting comments gathered at the booth and refining the materials for posting on the committee webpage. The committee discussed other venues for promoting the materials, such as an urban ecology themed EcoFest day and/or an Ecology Summit, similar to the Stormwater Summit held earlier this year. A. LeRoyer will reach out to Charlotte Milan about EcoFest.

A. LeRoyer asked if the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant could be used to fund a Summit. D. Morgan responded that the MVP Grant examining the social resiliency impacts of climate change would kick off soon; those results will inform the Municipal Vulnerability Plan, which will be combined with updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Master Plan update will follow in a few years.

D. Morgan brought the Nature Futures Framework, a UN initiative to support the development of models of desirable futures for people and nature, to the committee's attention. In collaboration with Tufts faculty, the Framework could be used to help Arlington examine the drivers of change in our natural systems and develop effective solutions to mitigate the effects of environmental change on people and biodiversity. Neighborhood Outreach Project & Land Conservation Networking Mini Grants of \$700 from the Mass Open Space Network could be a funding option.



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- d. Town Day.  
Arlington Town Day was held on Saturday, September 23. The committee did not set up a booth due to dire weather forecasts.
  - e. Other Items.  
No other items were discussed.
3. Updates from Liaisons.
- a. Department of Planning and Community Development.  
D. Morgan suggested the committee consider developing environmentally-themed programs for children through the town's existing extra-curricular network. The committee was enthusiastic. E. Hatch agreed to consult and D. Morgan agreed to reach out to S. Canniff, Arlington Recreation, and Arlington Community Education about the protocol for new classes.
  - b. Park and Recreation Commission.  
W. Richter reported on the new bench dedicated to A. LeRoyer at the Arlington Reservoir. E. Carr-Jones reported that the Robbins Farm Park playground project was scheduled to begin work the week of October 2.
  - c. Conservation Commission.  
D. Morgan, B. McBride, and A. LeRoyer reported on the Commission's public hearing under the Wetlands Protection Act for Thorndike Place, the proposed project for the Mugar property. The Commission's process has been thorough to minimize the potential impact of the project, involving peer reviewed planting and stormwater management plans. A conservation restriction has not been set, but the woods parcel will be separated from the development project.  
  
D. Morgan reported that a complete survey and forest management plan had been developed for the Symmes Woods, but ongoing funding has not yet been established. He also reported that he is working with Resilient Mystic Collaborative on an improvement plan for Meadowbrook Park to be funded through a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant.
  - d. Department of Public Works.  
There was no update on the Department of Public Works.
  - e. Envision Arlington.  
There was no update on Envision Arlington.
  - f. Arlington Redevelopment Board.



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W. Richter reported that the subcommittee's meeting with the MBTA Communities Working Group Chair was helpful in airing the committee's concerns about the plan. The ARB will discuss and vote on the plan on October 2, along with other zoning Warrant Articles.

g. Other Committees.

E. Carr-Jones reported that Save the Alewife Brook will be holding a Honk parade from Davis Square to Harvard Square on Sunday, October 8.

4. Updates/Discussion (Tracking).

a. Special Town Meeting.

Special Town Meeting will begin on October 17 for zoning Warrant Articles including MBTA Communities.

b. Artificial Turf.

E. Carr-Jones reported that the Artificial Turf Study Committee was still being formed.

c. CPA FY23 Updates (Cooke's Hollow, Mt. Gilboa, Hurd, RFP playground).

D. Morgan reported that the kickoff meeting with the landscape architect hired for the Mt. Gilboa project happened earlier that day.

d. CPA FY24 (Hill's Hill, Invasives, Mill Brook, Pond Lane, Foot of Rocks).

B. McBride reported that the Hill's Hill Committee's first meeting will be on October 10, and that Weston & Sampson had been chosen as the project contractor. D. Morgan reported there was a bid for the Pond Lane project. Some site clearing was reported at the Foot of the Rocks.

e. 40B Comprehensive Permit Projects (Mugar, 1021 Mass Ave, Mirak).

A. LeRoyer reported neighborhood complaints regarding site management on the Mirak project. D. Morgan said he would look into the environmental monitoring for the project. The 1021 Mass Ave project is currently on hold.

f. 2024 Meeting Schedule.

The committee will schedule meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month in 2024, except November and December, which will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday due to holiday conflicts.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10PM.

2023 Meetings.

(4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays except Nov. and Dec.): October 26, November 9, December 14.